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Fezzan & Ghadames

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African Studies Centre Leiden

African Postal Heritage

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Fezzan & Ghadames

Ton Dietz

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Introduction

Postage stamps and related objects are miniature communication tools, and they tell a story about cultural and political identities and about artistic forms of identity expressions. They are part of the world's material heritage, and part of history. Ever more of this postal heritage becomes available online, published by stamp collectors' organizations, auction houses, commercial stamp shops, online catalogues, and individual collectors. Virtually collecting postage stamps and postal history has recently become a possibility. These working papers about Africa are examples of what can be done. But they are work-in-progress! Everyone who would like to contribute, by sending corrections, additions, and new area studies can do so by sending an email message to the APH editors: Ton Dietz (dietzaj@asc.leidenuniv.nl) and Jan Jansen. You are welcome!

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Illustrations cover page:

Cape of Good Hope postage stamp 1853:

[http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/7/7c/Cape Triangular Postage Stamp.jpg/400px-Cape Triangular Postage Stamp.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/7/7c/Cape_Triangular_Postage_Stamp.jpg/400px-Cape_Triangular_Postage_Stamp.jpg)

Egypt postage stamp 1914:

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/4b/Post Stamp Egypt.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/4b/Post_Stamp_Egypt.jpg)

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Organization of this APH paper: we follow a chronological order.

S = Sassone Catalogo Specializzato dei Francobolli d'Italia e dei Paesi Italiani,
Fezzan/Ghadames: pp. 1123-1130

Y = Yvert et Tellier Catalogue Classiques du Monde, 2015

M = Michel Katalog Nord- und Ostafrika, 2005

For Italian Libya: see APH 57

For Cyrenaica: see APH 58

For Tripolitania: see APH 59

1 Introduction

Gerben van Gelder's website:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20180606005831/http://www.stampworldhistory.com/stamps-issuing-entities#> (adjusted)

Fezzan



Fezzan is located in northern Africa, part of current Libya. In the 19th century Fezzan was part of the Ottoman Empire. After the Italo-Turkish war in 1912, Italy took possession of Fezzan as part of Italian Libya. Fezzan came to be administered as part of the Military Territory of Southern Libya – effective Italian rule, though, was not established until 1930. During WWII, Libya was one of the major theaters of war. Fortunes changed between 1940 and 1943, but eventually events turned to the advantage of the Allies so that by 1943 the Italians have been driven out of Libya.

The British and the French divided Libya into three occupation zones: the British administered Cyrenaica and Tripolitania and the French administered the zone of Fezzan & Ghadames. The borders of these zones were different from the borders of the Italian period. Most notably the territory of Ghadames – part of the former Italian Tripolitania – became part of Fezzan & Ghadames and the Kufra region south of the former Italian Cyrenaica was attached to the Cyrenaica zone.

In 1943, the French established military administration for Fezzan & Ghadames. Although technically subordinate to the Allied command, the French de facto administered Fezzan & Ghadames as an extension of the Algerian Southern Territories – the southern part of Algeria

equally was under military administration. In 1948, the French detached Ghadames from Fezzan – Ghadames was attached to the Tunisian Southern Territories, a step that may well be explained by the alleged intentions of France to annex Fezzan proper to Algeria.

Fezzan is a sparsely populated region. The population consists of different peoples of Berber origin that are found both in Fezzan and in neighboring countries. The people live nomadic lives or pastoral lives in the oases. Caravan routes have crossed Fezzan for centuries.

By 1949, the United Nations stepped in to play an active part in Libya. A resolution was passed stating that independence should be achieved for Libya as a unified nation by 1952. Subsequently, in 1949, Fezzan and Ghadames were joined again and civil administration was established. In 1951, Libya gained independence as the Kingdom of Libya.

Postal history Fezzan



1946 – The fort of Sabha – Sebha. Fezzan was administered from Sabha.

The first stamps used may possibly have been the stamps of the Ottoman Empire. These were superseded by the issues for Italian Libya. The French issue stamps for Fezzan in 1943 – provisionals with different overprints on stamps from Italy and Italian Libya, have been issued by the occupying forces in small numbers. Subsequently, stamps from Algeria were used. The first definitives were issued for the combined territory of Fezzan & Ghadames in 1946 – inscribed 'Territoire Militaire Fezzan-Ghadames'. From 1948, stamps were issued inscribed 'Territoire Militaire Fezzan' reflecting the detachment of the Ghadames territory – the Fezzan issues remained valid in Ghadames though. Finally, in 1951 stamps were issued reflecting the change to civil administration as the stamps were now inscribed 'Territoire du Fezzan'.

From 1951 onwards, the stamps of Fezzan were superseded by the issues of independent Libya – they remained valid for use until 1952".

Ghadames



“Ghadames is located in northern Africa, part of current Libya. In the 19th century Ghadames was part of the Ottoman Empire. After the Italo-Turkish war, Italy took possession of Ghadames as part of Italian Libya in 1912. Ghadames came to be administered as part of the Italian colony of Italian Tripolitania. During WWII, Libya was one of the major theaters of war. Fortunes changed between 1940 and 1943, but eventually events turned to the advantage of the Allies who drove the Italians out of Libya by 1943.

The British and the French divided Libya into three occupation zones: the British administered Cyrenaica and Tripolitania and the French administered the zone of Fezzan & Ghadames. The borders of these zones were different from the borders of the Italian period. Most notably, the territory of Ghadames became part of Fezzan & Ghadames and the Kufra region, south of the former Italian Cyrenaica, was attached to the Cyrenaica zone.

In 1943, the French established military administration for Fezzan & Ghadames. Although technically subordinate to the Allied command, the French de facto administered Fezzan & Ghadames as an extension of the Algerian Southern Territories – the southern part of Algeria that also was under military administration. In 1948, the French detached Ghadames from Fezzan – Ghadames was then attached to the Tunisian Southern Territories. A step that may well be explained by the alleged intentions of France to annex Fezzan to Algeria.

By 1949, the United Nations stepped in to play an active part in Libya. A resolution was passed stating that independence should be achieved for Libya as a unified nation by 1952. Subsequently, in 1949, Fezzan and Ghadames were joined again and civil administration was established. In 1951, Libya gained independence as the Kingdom of Libya.

The population of Ghadames is of Berber origin, having been Arabized since the conquest of Libya by the Arabs in the 7th century. Ghadames may seem remote, but it is not entirely obscure. When Libya was part of the Roman Empire, a permanent Roman garrison was stationed in what was then called Cydamus. As Christianity made its advent, Ghadames became the seat of a bishop in the 6th century. Until well into the 20th century, Ghadames has been known as a station on the caravan routes across the Sahara. Currently, the town of Ghadames is a United Nations World Heritage Site.

Postal history Ghadames



1949 – Cross of Agadez. Please note the inscription at the bottom of the design reading ‘Croix d’Agadem’.

In Ghadames the stamps of the Ottoman Empire have been used until superseded by the issues of Italian Libya and Italian Tripolitania. The French first issued Provisionals for use in Fezzan in 1943. Although issued in limited numbers, evidence suggests these Provisionals were also used in Ghadames. Subsequently, stamps of Algeria have been used until the first definitives were issued for Fezzan & Ghadames in 1946. Specifically for Ghadames stamps were issued after the detachment of Ghadames from Fezzan in 1948 – one set has been issued in 1949. The stamps of Fezzan remained valid in Ghadames, the stamps of Ghadames were valid in Ghadames only.

Of interest, with respect to the design of the stamps, may be that it shows a cross that the designer has identified as the ‘Croix d’Agadem’. The cross is actually the cross of Agadez – a symbol used by the Tuareg, a nomadic people living all across the Sahara. The catalogues in their description also refer to the ‘Cross of Agadem’ – only Yvert & Tellier seems to have noted the apparent error and in its description refers to the ‘Cross of Agadez’.”.



9



<https://www.cherrystoneauctions.com/auctionscans200806/4007.jpg>: "1943 registered cover from Sebha to Mourzuk, cancelled "Fezzan Postes R.F. 13 May, 1943", boxed "P.P." and charged 1fr in manuscript, also noted in the same handwriting "manque figurines affranchissement..", indicating stamps not available, with violet arrival cancel, signed Bolaffi".

2.1 1943, 16 May: Italian stamps overprinted 'Fezzan'.

S1: 50c (with varieties)



<http://www.raritanstamps.com/Catold/89/LotImg/795.jpg>



<https://www.cherrystoneauctions.com/auctionscans200806/4012.jpg> : "1943 50c violet, surcharge double, n.h., v.f., with 1964 Bolaffi cert."



<https://www.cherrystoneauctions.com/auctionscans200806/4011.jpg> : "1943 50c violet, horizontal pair on censored cover to Algeria, both tied by "R.F. Sebha 3.Juin.1943" cancels, with censor markings at left and Algiers arrival on reverse, fine, signed Diena (catalogued as single used on cover, plus single off cover)".

2.2 1943, 16 May: Libyan Pittorica stamps overprinted 'Fezzan'

S2-10, including 7°: 0.50:5c, 1f:10c, 2f:30c, 3f:20c, 3.50f:25c, 5f:50c (two overprint colours), 10f:1.25L, 20f:1.75L, 50f:75c (with varieties)



<https://www.cherrystoneauctions.com/auctionscans200806/4013.jpg>: "1943 surcharges on the stamps of Libya (Pictorial Issue), 50c-50fr complete set of nine, 2fr l.h., others n.h., fine-v.f., signed Brun, top three values with 1997 Raybaudi cert. Only 79 complete sets possible".



<https://www.cherrystoneauctions.com/auctionscans200806/4015.jpg>: “1943 2fr on 30c black & brown, surcharge double, n.h., v.f., signed Diena, with 1970 Bolaffi cert., rare”.

1943, 16 May: Segnatasse / Poistage due: Libyan stamps overprinted ‘Fezzan’.

S Segnatasse 1-5: 0.50:5c, 1f:10c, 2f:25c, 3f:50c, 5f:1L (with varieties)



0.50 : 5c:

https://assets.lastdodo.com/image/ld_thumb3/plain/assets/catalog/assets/2015/9/10/2/d/4/pdf_2d4f5466-5811-11e5-8738-7aab2afd5c37.jpg

1Fr : 10c:

https://assets.lastdodo.com/image/ld_thumb3/plain/assets/catalog/assets/2015/9/10/4/c/e/pdf_4cea53fc-5811-11e5-8e08-873244327103.jpg

2Frs : 25c:

https://assets.lastdodo.com/image/ld_thumb3/plain/assets/catalog/assets/2015/9/10/6/7/2/pdf_6725c06c-5811-11e5-99a5-b8c1d8426963.jpg

3Frs : 50c:

https://assets.lastdodo.com/image/ld_thumb3/plain/assets/catalog/assets/2015/9/10/8/6/5/pdf_865b5820-5811-11e5-9bda-d24dc057752b.jpg

5Frs : 1L: <https://mynation.net/stamps/files/2020/04/23.jpg>

2.3 1943, 11 June: Posta Aerea: Italian stamp with ‘Fezzan’ overprint

S Posta Aerea 1: 50c (with varieties)



https://assets.lastdodo.com/image/ld_medium/plain/assets/catalog/assets/2015/9/10/2/b/e/pdf_2beee9b4-5808-11e5-9297-8e564e32ec53.jpg



<https://www.raritanstamps.com/Catold/89/LotImg/797.jpg>



<https://www.cherrystoneauctions.com/auctionscans200806/4008.jpg> : "1943 surcharges, eight diff. (missing only 1fr on 10c), plus additional franking, used on two covers from Sebha 16 May, 1943 to Ghadames, some minor toning, mostly fine-v.f., signed Brun, Roumet etc. A rarity, only 79 printed of the 50fr surcharge (catalogued as used stamps, without any consideration for the cover premium)".



<https://www.cherrystoneauctions.com/auctionscans200806/4009.jpg>: "1943 Flown cover from Sebha (showing return address of the Lt. Col. Delange, military commandant of Fezzan) to Brazzaville franked with 50c violet, 3fr on 20c, plus air post 50c brown (three), fine-v.f., backstamped on arrival, with Bertrand Sinais cert. (catalogued as PA1 on cover, rest as used singles)".

1943, 16 May: Posta Aerea: Libyan stamp with 'Fezzan' overprint

S Posta Aerea 2: 7.50:50c (with varieties)



<https://storage.googleapis.com/hipstamp/p/87af83fe60f79c91c74ea66764da552f.jpg>



<https://www.cherrystoneauctions.com/auctionscans200806/4020.jpg> : "1943 cover franked with 5fr and 7.50fr surcharges, two of each, registered and flown from Sebha,

with special handstamp "R.F. P.T.T. Fezzan Occupation Taxe Percue", v.f., rare provisional handstamp, signed Bolaffi, Calves"



<https://www.cherrystoneauctions.com/auctionscans200806/4010.jpg>: "1943 registered postal card franked with five different surcharges, Sebha departure handstamp, 16.5.43 date filled in by pen, v.f., signed Bolaffi".

2.4 1943, 11 June Italian stamps with hand-made overprints

S11: 0.50:50c



https://assets.lastdodo.com/image/ld_medium/plain/assets/catalog/assets/2015/9/10/5/6/9/pdf_569a369a-580e-11e5-8c3f-d204c273ef53.jpg

2.5 1943, 17 July: Libyan Pittorica stamps with hand-made overprints

S12: 1f:25c (with varieties)



<https://www.cherrystoneauctions.com/auctionscans200806/4023.jpg>: "1943 cover from Alger to Fezzan, franked by pair of 1.20fr Algeria, both tied by Alger cds, handstamped with large "T" and with Fezzan 1fr on 25c added on arrival, tied by Fezzan cds, some staining on reverse (affecting the stamp), otherwise fine and unusual application of Fezzan franking as postage due, signed Calves".



<https://www.cherrystoneauctions.com/auctionscans200806/4024.jpg>: "1943 1fr on 25c light blue, surcharge inverted variety, used in combination with 50c airpost on cover from Sebha to Souma, Algeria, where 50c Postage Due was applied, open by censors, v.f. This error is only known used and Enzo Diena states (in his 1989 certificate) that this is the only one he has seen on cover, also signed Calves, listed but unpriced in Sassone".



<https://www.cherrystoneauctions.com/auctionscans200806/4022.jpg>: “1943 cover franked with two different adhesives, usual toning around the perforations, fine-v.f., signed Brun”.

2.6 1943, 17 July: Libyan Pacchi Postali stamps with hand-made overprints

S13-19: 1f:5c, 1f:10c, 1f:50c, 1f:1L, 1f:2L, 1f:3L, 1f:4f (with varieties), and 17A and 18A: 0.50:2L, 0.50:3L.



<https://www.cherrystoneauctions.com/auctionscans200806/4027.jpg>: “1943 surcharges on Parcel Post stamps of Libya, four different pairs, l.h., fine-v.f., signed Brun, Calves, Bolaffi etc., with photocopy of Diena cert., only 90 of each printed”.



https://gcp-la8-storage-cdn.lot-art.com/public/upl/39/Fezzan-1943-Overprinted-postal-parcels-2-values-Sassone-NN-1415_1599836705_6746.jpg



<https://www.cherrystoneauctions.com/auctionscans200806/4030.jpg>: "1943 surcharged on Parcel Post stamps of Libya, 1fr on 2L green, horizontal pair with sheet margin at right, lightly hinged, fresh and v.f., signed Brun, Robineau, Behr etc., only 40 printed, very few exist unused".



<https://www.cherrystoneauctions.com/auctionscans200806/4032.jpg>: "1943 surcharges on Parcel Post stamps of Libya, 1f on 3L yellow, l.h., fine, signed Brun, with 1989 Diena cert. A rarity, only 40 printed, very few exist unused".



https://www.delcampe.net/static/img_large/auction/000/536/378/510_002.jpg?v=11



<https://www.cherrystoneauctions.com/auctionscans200806/4026.jpg>: "1943 1fr surcharges on parcel post of Libya, including 5c (2), 1L and 4L in pairs, plus halves of the 10c, 50c, 2L and 3L, also unadopted circular 50c surcharge on halves of 2L and 3L (which were issued only for the 50c violet and Air Post 50c brown), all affixed to official

presentation folio, containing a smaller folio indicating the quantities overprinted, including 180 for the 5c-50c, 170 for the 1L, 80 for the 2L and 4L, and 70 for the 3L, postmarked "R.F. Sebha Fezzan", dated July 17, 1943 and bearing the pencil approval of Col. Delange, Commander of the Occupation Army. The 50c surcharges are mentioned in a footnote in Sassone but are unpriced. This folio is unique and represents the only complete set (including unadopted values) known. A major rarity of Fezzan, signed Calves, with 1970 Alberto Diena cert. (YT 21/27)".



<https://www.cherrystoneauctions.com/auctionscans200806/4025.jpg>: "1943 surcharges on Parcel Post stamps of Libya, the complete set of 7 pairs, plus extra 1fr on 50c, used on two registered covers, cancelled "Sebha, Fezzan" 17 July and 18 July, 1943, used locally, fine-v.f., signed Bolaffi. Only 35 sets printed, catalogued as used stamps off cover" (second letter not displayed).



<https://www.cherrystoneauctions.com/auctionscans200806/4028.jpg> : “1943 surcharges on Parcel Post stamps of Libya, four different, each used on a military card from Sebha to Brazzaville, fine-v.f., backstamped on arrival, with separate Bertrand Sinais certificates (catalogued as used off cover)”.



<https://www.cherrystoneauctions.com/auctionscans200806/4029.jpg>: "1943 surcharges on Parcel Post stamps of Libya, 1fr on 10c ultramarine (also right half of the pair), 1fr on 2L green, plus horizontal pair of 5fr on 50c (Sass.7), all used on registered and flown cover from Sebha to Murzuk, minute toned spots, otherwise v.f., with appropriate markings, signed Calves, with 1989 Diena cert. (catalogued as used off cover)".



<https://www.cherrystoneauctions.com/auctionscans200806/4031.jpg>: “1943 surcharged on Parcel Post stamps of Libya, 1fr on 2L green, block of four (two horizontal pairs), cancelled by Sebha 18 July 1943 pmks on cover, little toned spot, otherwise v.f., signed Brun (catalogued as used off cover)”.

2.7 1943, 11 June: Posta Aerea: Italian stamp with hand-made overprint

S Posta Aerea 3: 0.50:50c



https://assets.lastdodo.com/image/ld_medium/plain/assets/catalog/assets/2015/9/10/e/8/7/pdf_e8723670-580f-11e5-8de1-69ade1d10ea8.jpg



<https://www.cherrystoneauctions.com/auctionscans200806/4016.jpg>: "1943 registered cover from Sebha to Brazzaville franked with 5fr on 50c, also provisional surcharges including 50c on 50c violet, 1fr on 25c blue, plus air post 50c on 50c brown, some usual toning, backstamped on arrival, fine-v.f., with Bertrand Sinais cert. (catalogued as PA3 on cover, rest as used singles)".

3 Fezzan & Ghadames as a Military Territory, 1946

3.1 1946, 29 October

S1-15: 10c, 50c, 1f, 1.50f, 2f, 2.50f, 3f, 5f, 6f, 10f, 15f, 20f, 25f, 40f, 50f (with varieties)



https://www.freestampcatalogue.com/media/catalog/product/cache/2/small_image/400x400/730f6beb335f248cfe85fdbb46a85728/f/z/fzp0016.jpg



https://www.histoire-et-philatelie.fr/images/004_pays_vaincus/fezzan/1ere-serie-sl-poste-restante.jpg



<https://www.cherrystoneauctions.com/auctionscans202105/237.jpg>

4 Fezzan as a Military Territory, 1948

4.1 1948 Posta Aerea (1 March)

S Posta Aerea 1-2: 100f, 200f (with varieties)



https://www.freestampcatalogue.com/media/catalog/product/cache/2/small_image/cd_a336a043e3dd4940536205f9a4466b/f/z/fzp0031.jpg



https://www.histoire-et-philatelie.fr/images/004_pays_vaincus/fezzan/fezzan_pa_4et5_sur_lr.jpg

4.2 1949, 1 July, first regular series

S16-26: 1f, 2f, 4f, 5f, 8f, 10f, 12f, 15f, 20f, 25f, 50f



https://www.freestampcatalogue.com/media/catalog/product/cache/2/small_image/cd_a336a043e3dd4940536205f9a4466b/f/z/fzp0033.jpg



https://assets.lastdodo.com/image/ld_medium/plain/assets/catalog/assets/2015/12/9/d/e/7/pdf_de71fe52-9e88-11e5-94e8-439d7ede1a8a.jpg



<https://pictures.auktionen-gaertner.de/auction/6961/986961-000000.jpg>

4.3 1950, 1 October; Segnatasse / Postal due: Brac oasis

S Segnatasse 1-6: 1f, 2f, 3f, 5f, 10f, 20f



https://www.freestampcatalogue.com/media/catalog/product/cache/2/small_image/cda336a043e3dd4940536205f9a4466b/f/z/fzpt6.jpg

4.4 1951: 25 June: second regular series and Airmail

S29-40: 30c, 1f, 2f, 4f, 5f, 8f, 10f, 12f, 15f, 20f, 25f, 50f (with varieties), 40A, and 40B: both 50f, different colours, and Posta Aerea A3-A4: 100f, 200f (with varieties)



<https://i.ebayimg.com/images/g/y3AAAOSw4F9kjHtr/s-l400.jpg>



<https://kelleherstampassets.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/Sales/747/765576.jpg>



<https://kelleherstampassets.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/Sales/747/765576N2.jpg>



<https://kelleherstampassets.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/Sales/747/765576N3.jpg>



<https://kelleherstampassets.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/Sales/747/765576N4.jpg> :

“1951, Military Territory 30c to 50f complete, perforated sheetlets of three, in issued colors, all with "Atelier de Fabrication des Timbres-Postes. Paris" imprints and control die cuts in margin at bottom, o.g., never hinged, Very Fine”.



<https://www.cherrystoneauctions.com/auctionscans202105/241.jpg>

4.5 1951, 20 July: Social work

S27-28: 15f+5f, 25f+5f (with varieties)



https://www.freestampcatalogue.com/media/catalog/product/cache/2/small_image/cda336a043e3dd4940536205f9a4466b/f/z/fzp0058.jpg

5 Ghadames as a Military Territory, 1949



<https://www.dcstamps.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/NAF-Ghadames-Map.png>

5.1 1949, 12 April

S41-48: 4f, 5f, 8f, 10f, 12f, 15f, 20f, 25f (with varieties), and Posta Aerea A5-A6: 50f, 100f (with varieties), and A6A-A6M: 100f (nine stamps with different colours), as well as A6/IA-A6/IN: 100f (ten stamps with different colours and not perforated).



https://www.freestampcatalogue.com/media/catalog/product/cache/2/small_image/cd_a336a043e3dd4940536205f9a4466b/f/z/fzgh1_0.jpg



<https://www.raritanstamps.com/Catold/79/LotImg/329.jpg>: "1948-51, Airplanes and Cross of Agadem, three imperforated complete sets, the total is 12 stamps, most with sheet margins".



https://www.histoire-et-philatelie.fr/images/004_pays_vaincus/fezzan/ghadames-100-50-sl-usa.jpg



<https://www.raritanstamps.com/Catold/94/LotImg/1035.jpg>

In December 1951 Fezzan and Ghadames, together with Cyrenaica and Tripolitania became part of the Kingdom of Libya that would last until 1969.